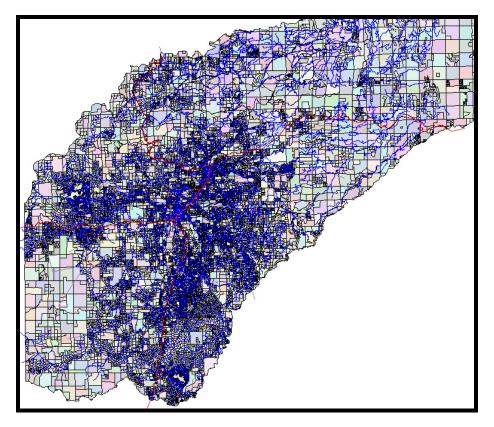
#### DRAFT REPORT



Viper / TP+ Traffic Model Coverage Area (west slope Nevada County)

# TRAFFIC MODEL UPDATE MINUTP TO VIPER/TP+ CONVERSION AND LAND USE UPDATE WITH NEW CENSUS DATA AND INTERFACE WITH COUNTY'S GIS SYSTEM

## Prepared for the **N**EVADA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Several changes and upgrades took place with the update of the Nevada County Transportation Commission's traffic model of the western slope of Nevada County. These changes included transfer of existing data from one software package to another more modern software package (MINUTP to Viper/TP+). This software upgrade facilitated several new benefits including:

- The ability to interface with the County's GIS system through industry standard GIS "shape file" exchange and spreadsheet exchange of data
- The ability to create PDF documents of model run data, facilitating email and web site use and review of data for those without specialized and expensive traffic modeling software
- More refined and improved traffic modeling options
- A much better graphical interface to the data, and ability to show GIS data alongside with traffic model data, creating a more understandable picture (with true shape roads, parcel boundaries, etc.)

These changes were implemented in this work effort, and the result is the construction of a new traffic model that builds upon the old, and improves the usability of data output from traffic model results and runs with a larger audience.



#### INTRODUCTION

The County's existing MINUTP traffic model had reached the pinnacle of its usefulness in the Year 2000. With newer software alternatives available to MINUTP (a DOS based system fairly unfriendly to Windows systems), and with the transition of Caltrans to use the newer software in the near future, as well as many neighboring counties, the NCTC felt that making the change would be a good idea for now and the future.

The purpose of this work effort was to take the existing MINUTP model and make a conversion of its data to work in the new Viper / TP+ software package that runs in Windows, and interfaces with the popular Arview GIS software packages (now in use by the County of Nevada and the NCTC, and City of Grass Valley). It was desired by the NCTC that new traffic analysis zones (TAZ's) be developed that matched the boundaries of the Census Tract maps, and block numbering areas. The new TAZ map was to be constructed with the aid of the County's GIS and Planning/Engineering departments.

It was also desired that the new model closely replicate the performance of the old model, and that special care be exercised in calibrating the new tool to updated traffic count data, and assessors data, etc. It was also desired that the participating government agencies have a part in the development of the model's land use databases, by providing raw and organized land use data for the model in the form of census data, parcel data, growth assumptions, etc. This information would be used to develop traffic models for the existing conditions, and for a variety of future conditions including, Year 2020, Year 2040, and Buildout conditions.



#### OVERVIEW, BACKGROUND, AND METHODOLOGY

A traffic model is a tool that enables the prediction of existing and future traffic scenarios, based upon a set of assumptions for land use quantities and roadway conditions. For example, with a traffic model is it possible to test future scenarios of land use development and find out what impacts in traffic volume is likely to take place on the roadway system. It is also possible to test new roadways and check their effectiveness or utilization. The model is a dynamic tool, with a base set of data that can be altered to check various scenarios.

The Change from MINUTP to Viper / TP+: Justification

The NCTC Nevada County west slope MINUTP model had reached its pinnacle of usefulness by the Year 1999/2000. Newer software packages were becoming available, but no new improvements or upgrades were being made to MINUTP, a DOS based system that did not interface with Windows or GIS systems. This made the presentation of the data and results difficult, and made peer review of data also cumbersome. The software company who sells MINUTP had made the decision to guit developing MINUTP upgrades, and it became a static product. This same company had made a push towards a new software program that had more powerful features and capabilities. This new software program called Viper / TP+ has a Microsoft Windows interface as well as GIS features that reads and writes industry standard "Shape files," which are commonly used in programs such as ArcView, ArcInfo, and AutoCAD (currently in use by government agencies in Nevada County, and most every other county throughout California). The NCTC also has the ArcView software and will be able to easily graphically read the data sets in the model. For example, one can visually zoom and pan their way to a certain street and area in the County, the City of Grass Valley, or Nevada City, and with the simple click of a mouse, instantly see a pop up window containing the land use totals that are in a specific TAZ (traffic analysis zone). In this manner it can be much easier to verify data used in traffic studies, planning studies, etc. The more verifiable a model is, the higher the confidence in its results. For these reasons, among others, the traffic model was upgraded from MINUTP to Viper / TP+.

Methodology: New Revised Traffic Analysis Zones

The NCTC traffic model data sets were retained and transferred in tact as much as is possible. A direct translation was not entirely possible, due to the goal to revise the traffic analysis zones in the model to match the Census Tract block numbering area (BNA) boundaries contained in the computerized Tiger files in the County's GIS system. We first obtained a copy of the new Year 2000 Census Tract BNA boundary shape files from the



County's GIS system. This information was loaded into our ArcView software and the BNA shapes were aggregated in the software as appropriate into larger Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ). Many of the new TAZ matched the boundaries in the older TAZ, because they were already conformant with the Census Tract BNA shapes.

In many cases, the TAZ boundary matched exactly the BNA boundaries, as the BNA was typically the smallest area that could become a TAZ. In a few cases where the BNA was very large (such as the BNA which contained the Nevada Union High School and Sierra College campuses), the BNA was further subdivided to account for significant differences in traffic assignment (the High School accesses Ridge Road exclusively, and the college accesses Sierra College Drive exclusively). As a general rule, the BNA was not to be subdivided except in very few cases. This was to keep the TAZ data as compatible as possible with the Census Tract data boundaries, except where it was detrimental to the proper operation of the traffic model. In this manner, it is much easier to verify and compare land use data in the traffic model to existing and future Census data.

Methodology: Updated Street Network and Assessors Data

The street network in the new model was built entirely from the County's GIS Roadway shape file data. In this manner, the roadways in the model contain the same visual / geographic Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) surveyed data features, as well as other data associated with the street network links (street name, surface type, functional class, lanes, etc). To this data, we also added new data relevant to a traffic model, such as roadway lane capacity, speeds, pm peak count, ADT count, Terrain, and any other data deemed relevant in the future. The model is upgradeable to be able to add new features and fields of data at any time.

In addition to creating a new street network which visually contains every single road in the County, we utilized the County Assessor's Parcel data set to determine how many homes were in each TAZ, how many acres of various land use, etc. This data was supplied by the County and used in the ArcView software to view visually, as well as in Excel spreadsheets to sort and further organize the data into a format useable by the Viper / TP+ traffic model. The end result was a DBase IV format spreadsheet file of dwelling unit and acreage totals by TAZ, which is interchangeable with the County's GIS system, and readable with ArcView software with graphical TAZ map overlays.

Methodology: Calibration and Validation

The NCTC traffic model created using MINUTP had been previously calibrated and validated, and even updated several times over the six year period of its



use for various NCTC study projects. The model had been verified previously with every major project for which it was used, including the Empire Interchange and SR 20 Corridor Study, the Mitigation Fee and Capital Improvement Program studies, etc.

The new model was calibrated in the same manner as its MINUTP predecessor, the land use data was assembled and trip generation rates supplied, and traffic was assigned to the new street network operative in the Viper / TP+ software program. The initial results needed revision or calibration adjustments. In the initial stages, mistakes and typos were found and corrected in the data sets. After the data was "cleaned up" and verified, it was still necessary to further adjust various traffic model parameters, such as the friction factor curves, roadway speeds, and trip generation rates, over a several month period of time, until the results of traffic projections in the new model closely replicated existing conditions. The same procedures used to develop and calibrate the MINUTP model were utilized in the calibration of the new Viper / TP+ traffic model. The TP+ model is essentially a similar "engine" under the hood (the gravity model), but it has a better graphical interface via the Viper program, which allows for better inspection and verification of data and model output.

The traffic projections from the model were compared within the traffic model software itself, to the existing traffic count data supplied by the County of Nevada Engineering Staff. The existing traffic count data is now a part of the traffic model street network data set, and comparisons between count data and projection results are easily made within the software. Generally speaking, the new traffic model calibration output matches fairly closely to the traffic count data. The Caltrans guidelines for traffic model performance is that major freeways or highways should match within 10% to 25% of the existing count (depending on the magnitude of the volume). For example, a major urban freeway system with over 100,000 ADT should match to within 10% of the traffic model projection. A minor highway with 10,000 ADT could have a margin of error as high as 25% and still be considered within the acceptable margin of error. Minor roadways within the County would have an even higher tolerance level (between 25% and 60% error). These Caltrans guidelines are "generous" pertaining to margins of error, primarily because many traffic models are not detailed, and the results from a model limited in street network and land use specifics can yield more broad-brushed results. The NCTC new Viper / TP+ traffic model is highly detailed in street network, and yields better traffic projections as a result. All streets in the new traffic model meet the specific Caltrans criteria for calibration and validation, as will be detailed in the next section.



#### Model Performance and Comparison to Old

The new NCTC traffic model performance was compared with the older traffic model, and found to be more accurate, more complete, more compatible with Census data, and yielding better simulation of existing traffic conditions.

Part of the reason for these improvements has to do with the better data sets that were available at the outset of this work effort by virtue of the County's GIS system containing assessor's parcel data, GPS level accuracy in surveyed road data and distances, as well as more refinement in trip generation rates for various land use types in the model. Previously the model was limited to only 13 trip generation rates for attractions, whereas the new software has no such limitations, and we utilized 31 trip generation rates to better account for fast food development, service stations, and restaurant uses, etc. The result has been much more accurate trip generation and assignment in areas such as the Brunswick Basin where a variety of complex commercial land uses are in place.

Table I has been prepared to report the results of the traffic model calibration and validation as it relates to trip generation and trip assignment onto the street network. The model is supposed to perform within certain parameters in this area, and Caltrans has prepared guidelines for this reason. The new NCTC Viper / TP+ model performs well within the Caltrans guidelines, just as did it's MINUTP predecessor, but the overall results with the new model are actually better. This is partially due to the better trip generation rate accuracy that is now possible with the new software.

Table I has a few lines where the percentage error was greater than the guidelines, however, there are additional guidelines that when traffic volumes are very low, they are relatively insignificant to the overall performance of the model. In other words, it is expected that a few minor streets will have what appears to be large percentage differences from counts, but when the actual volume is considered, it is insignificant. For example, on Idaho Maryland Road east of Brunswick the traffic model volume was only 64 vehicles per hour (VPH) but the traffic count was 180 vph. This difference of 116 vph is fairly small, and especially when it is considered that the traffic volume along Idaho Maryland is very small as well. Over 92% of the links summarized perform at acceptable levels, and the 8% which do not are low volume and less significant roads.



Table I

Calibration Results of Traffic Model Performance to Existing Counts

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ROAD & LOCATION	Year 2000 ADT Counts		Traffic Model	% Error	OK?
ADAM AVE. N OF SQUIRRELL CRK	1400	126	73	42%	Yes
ALLISON RANCH-S McCOURTNEY	850	77	65	15%	Yes
ALTA SIERRA DR. E. OF HWY 49	6500	585	470	20%	Yes
ALTA SIERRA DR. W. OF DOG BAR RD.	2650	239	355	-49%	Yes
ALTA ST. SE. OF RIDGE RD.	3400	306	130	58%	No
AUBURN RD. S. OF McCOURTNEY RD.	1800	162	354		No
BANNER LAVA CAP W. OF GAYLE LN.	4200	378	156		No
BANNER LAVA CAP W. OF GRACIE RD.	2300	207	53	74%	No
BANNER LAVA CAP W. OLD TUNNEL	4100	369	240	35%	Yes
BANNER LAVA CAP/E I.MARYLAND	1200	108	86	20%	Yes
BANNER LAVA CAP/NW I. MARYLAND	1250	113	70	38%	Yes
BITNEY SPRINGS RD N. OF R&R HWY	3000	270	285	-6%	Yes
BITNEY SPRINGS NO N. OF RER HWT BITNEY SPRINGS-N NEWTOWN	1200	108	152	-41%	Yes
BITNEY SPRINS/SE PLEASANT VALLEY	700	63	38	40%	Yes
BOULDER ST. @ E. NEV CTY LIMIT	4500	405	350	14%	Yes
BRUNSWICK RD N. OF HWY 174	8200	738	502	32%	
BRUNSWICK RD NW. OF E. BENNETT	11000	738 990	627		Yes
BRUNSWICK RD NW. OF LOMA RICA DR				376 23%	Yes
	15000	1350	1037 2296	436 78	Yes
BRUNSWICK RD OVERXING TOTAL	27500	2475	526	7% 35%	Yes
BRUNSWICK RD SE. OF E. BENNETT RD	9000	810		35% 2%	Yes
BRUNSWICK/N I.MARYLAND	12500	1125	1100		Yes
BRUNSWICK/S I.MARYLAND	14500	1305	1131	13%	Yes
COMBIE RD. E. OF HWY 49	16000	1440	1560	-8%	Yes
COMBIE RD. S OF SHOPPING CENTER	2000	180	190	-6%	Yes
COMBIE RD. SE. OF MAGNOLIA	6000	540	495		Yes
DOG BAR RD. NW. OF ALTA SIERRA	6000	540	725		Yes
DOG BAR RD. S. OF ALTA SIERRA	4000	360	340	6%	Yes
DOG BAR RD. S. OF LABARR MDWS RD.	7000	630	800	-27%	Yes
DOG BAR RD. SE OF MAGNOLIA RD.	1200	108	250	-131%	No
E.BENNETT RD E GV CITY LIMIT	2200	198	224	-13%	Yes
E.BENNETT RD SW BRUNSWICK RD	1200	108	101	6%	Yes
E.EMPIRE ST E GRASS VALLEY CITY	4200	378	547	-45%	Yes
GARDEN BAR RD S. OF WOLF RD.	1000	90	81	10%	Yes
GOLD FLAT RD SE. OF HOLLOW WY	4500	405	309	24%	Yes
GOLD FLAT RD. S. OF GRACIE RD	2500	225	203	10%	Yes
GRACIE RD. NW. OF BANNER LAVA CAP	1050	95	112	-19%	Yes
GRACIE RD. SE. OF GOLD FLAT RD	1900	171	112	35%	Yes
GREENHORN RD NE. OF BRUNSWICK RD	3500	315	149	53%	No
IDAHO-MARYLAND RD W. OF BANNER L.C.	1200	108	75	31%	Yes
IDAHO-MARYLAND/E BRUNSWICK	2000	180	64	64%	No
INDIAN SPRINGS RD W. OF McCOURTNEY	1500	135	74	45%	Yes
JOERSCHKE DR SE. OF NEV CTY HWY	3000	270	250	7%	Yes
Labarr Meadows RD E. OF HWY 49	700	63	74	-17%	Yes
Labarr Meadows RD N. OF DOG BAR RD.	7500	675	780	-16%	Yes
Labarr Meadows RD SW. OF DOG BAR	1200	108	124	-15%	Yes
LIME KILN RD SE. OF McCOURTNEY	1450	131	137	-5%	Yes
LIME KILN W. OF HWY 49	3000	270	228	16%	Yes
LOMA RICA DR E. OF BRUNSWICK RD	7000	630	624	1%	Yes
MAGNOLIA RD E. OF LK OF PINES	5000	450	323	28%	Yes
McCOURTNEY RD S. OF INDIAN SPRINGS	2200	198	195	2%	Yes



Table I Continued	Yr 2000 ADT	' Peak Hour	Model	% Error	OK?
McCOURTNEY RD SW. OF BRIGHTON ST.	9000	810	740	9%	Yes
McCOURTNEY RDNE INDIAN SPRINGS	2400	216	183	15%	Yes
McCOURTNEY-W AUBURN RD	6000	540	372	31%	Yes
MOONEY FLAT RD N. OF HWY 20	700	63	94	-49%	Yes
MOUNT OLIVE RD NE. OF DOG BAR RD	100	9	30	-233%	No
NEV CTY HWY SW. OF BRUNSWICK RD	13100	1179	1240	-5%	Yes
NEV. CTY HWY NE. OF BRUNSWICK RD	20000	1800	1508	16%	Yes
NEV. CTY HWY SW OF BANNER LAVA CAP	7000	630	544	14%	Yes
NEV.CTY HWY N OF NEV CTY LIMIT	8000	720	808	-12%	Yes
NEWTOWN RD NE. OF BITNEY SPRINGS	1000	90	80	11%	Yes
NEWTOWN RD SW. OF HWY 49	1600	144	80	44%	Yes
OLD TUNNEL RD S. BANNER LAVA CAP	3500	315	287	9%	Yes
OLD TUNNEL RD. N. OF BRUNSWICK RD	4200	378	361	4%	Yes
PENN VALLEY DR SE EASY ST	4000	360	512	-42%	Yes
PENN VALLEY DR W. OF SPNCVLL RD	4000	360	260	28%	Yes
PENN VALLEY/SW HWY 20(E END)	5300	477	421	12%	Yes
PLEASANT VALLEY N-WILDFLOWER	2400	216	231	-7%	Yes
PLEASANT VALLEY RD N. OF HWY 20	12000	1080	1080	0%	Yes
PLEASANT VALLEY RD S. OF BITNEY SPR	1100	99	121	-22%	Yes
PLEASANT VALLEY RD W. OF HWY 49	800	72	83	-15%	Yes
QUAKER HILL CROSS RD NE. OF RED DOG	2000	180	157	13%	Yes
RATTLESNAKE RD NE. OF DOG BAR RD	1100	99	64	35%	Yes
RATTLESNAKE RD S. OF HWY 174	3000	270	155	43%	Yes
RED DOG RD-NW PARK AVE	4500	405	333	18%	Yes
RED DOG SE PASQUALE	3000	270	194	28%	Yes
RIDGE RD E. OF R&R HWY	5000	450	657	-46%	Yes
RIDGE RD SW. OF HUGHES RD.	8500	765	810	-6%	Yes
RIDGE RD W. OF NEV CTY HWY	7500	675	545	19%	Yes
ROUGH & READY HWY NW. OF ADAM ST.	6000	540	661	-22%	Yes
ROUGH & READY HWY W. OF BITNEY SPRGS	4500	405	305	25%	Yes
ROUGH & READY HWY W. OF RIDGE RD	7500	675	661	2%	Yes
SQUIRREL CREEK RD W. OF R&R HWY	3200	288	274	5%	Yes
SQUIRREL CREEK RD-W ADAMS	2300	207	111	46%	Yes
SR 20 North of Empire	35000	3150	3310	-5%	Yes
SR 20 North of Uren	7500	675	553	18%	Yes
SR 20 West of Brighton	16000	1440	1357	6%	Yes
SR 20 West of Penn Valley	6700	603	654	-8%	Yes
SR 49 East of Newtown	6300	567	577	-2%	Yes
SR 49 North of Tyler Foote	3300	297	320	-8%	Yes
SR 49 South of Combie	28000	2520	2372	6%	Yes
SR 49 North of Combie	25000	2250	2450	-9%	Yes
SR 49 South of Empire	34000	3060	3030	1%	Yes
SR 49 West of SR 20	11000	990	1071	-8%	Yes
SUTTON @ GRASS VALLEY CITY	7000	630	348	45%	Yes
SUTTON-E OF BRUNSWICK WB & EB	11000	990	990	0%	Yes
SUTTON-W OF BRUNSWICK WB& EB	11500	1035	887	14%	Yes
TYLER-FOOTE CROSS RD NE. OF 49	2000	180	126	30%	Yes
WASHINGTON RD NE. OF HWY 20	400	36	44	-22%	Yes
WILLOW VALLEY RD @NEV CITY LIMIT	2500	225	208	8%	Yes
WOLF RD S. OF LIME KILN	500	45	49	-9%	Yes
WOLF RD W. OF HWY 49 (W. OF	3500	315	430	-37%	Yes
		55103	51980	6%	

Source: NCTC Traffic Year 2000 Viper / TP+ Model



#### **DATA SETS AND DATA PRESENTATION**

The detailed data for the Year 2000 Viper / TP+ traffic model conversion can be found at the <a href="www.prismworld.com">www.prismworld.com</a> web site under the NCTC Traffic Model Update section, which also offers the source shape files for viewing with the ESRI ArcView software. The land use totals for the Years 2000, 2020, 2040 are displayed in the following table.

Table II	Land Use Totals by Category
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Land Use Category	Year 2000	Year 2020	Year 2040	Units
R1_SF	6800	8469	9033	Dwelling Units
R2_MF	1873	2213	3391	Dwelling Units
RR_RUR	11047	17411	22820	Dwelling Units
AF_LOW	7831	10876	12194	Dwelling Units
RETIRE	122	176	176	Dwelling Units
RETLOW	0	0	0	Dwelling Units
MOBILEHOME	1005	1243	1423	Dwelling Units
COMM	73 17	103 24	146 34	Acres
INDUST	74			Acres
EMPCEN	37	104	148 74	Acres
TOURIST		52		Acres
BUSDIST	90.8	128	182	Acres
LITEIND	219	309	438	Acres
OFFICEPRO	112	158	224	Acres
PUBLIC	33	47	66	Acres
LODGING	20	28	40	Acres
HIGH SCHOOL	151	213	302	Acres
COMM_HI	142	200	284	Acres
PARK	159	224	318	Acres
CHURCH	37	52	74	Acres
BP	19	27	38	Acres
FASTFOOD	21	30	42	Acres
DENNYS BLACKANGUS	7	10	14	Acres
	0 2	0	0 4	Acres
OFFICEGEN				Acres
MINIWARE GASSTATION	23	32	46 12	Acres
GASSTATION	6 2	8	4	Acres
FIRESTA	6	ა 8	12	Acres
ELEMSCHOOL	98		196	Acres
MIDSCHOOL	96 67	138 94	134	Acres
QUIKSTOP	67 1	94	134	Acres
				Acres
EMPIREMINE	746	1052	1492	Acres
HOSPITAL	13	18	26	Acres
GOLFHOLES	18	25	36	Holes
SIERRACOL RAQUETCLUB	98	138 6	196	Acres
	4 3	4	8	Acres
CONVALESNT	3	4	6	Acres



Using the ArcView software, it is possible for the user to graphically find land use data by TAZ, by street, or by some other visual landmark.

The Year 2000 land use data has the following totals:

- 28,678 DU in the new model compared to 28,240 DU in the previous MINUTP model, an increase of 438 DU. Some differences will be due to new homes built since the last model update, and possible corrections to assessors data and assumptions for population conversions, etc.
- Other Commercial / Industrial / Service totals as shown in Table II

